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Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 SAJ-01 CU-04 DRC-01

(ISO) W
---------- 041047
R 200545Z OCT 73
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8510
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SAIGON
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 10599

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS
TAGS: PFOR, CH, TH
SUBJECT: PRC-THAILAND

REF (A) WR 42, (B) HONG KONG 10529

SUMMARY: PEKING HAS REPORTED FORMATION OF NEW RTG GOVERNMENT BUT IS STILL HEDGING ITS POSITION PENDING FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS. END SUMMARY.
1. NCNA OCTOBER 19 CITING ACCOUNTS FROM BANGKOK REPORTED NEW THAI PRIMIN SANYA HAD ANNOUNCED FORMATION OF 28 MEMBER CABINET. NOTING SANYA CABINET WAS FORMED AFTER THANOM AND PRAPHAT HAD BEEN COMPELLED TO RESIGN BY "LARGE SCALE DEMONSTRATIONS STAGED BY THAI STUDENTS WITH
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SUPPORT OF THE MASSES," NCNA SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THAT 15 MEMBERS

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OF NEW CABINET HAD BEEN IN PREVIOUS THANOM CABINET. ARTICLE THEN LISTED PREVIOUS POSITIONS OF DEFENSE MINISTER DAWEE CHULLASAPYA, FONMIN CHAROON PHAND ISSARANGKUL NA AYUTTHAYA, AND MIN TO PRIMIN SAWAENG SENANARONG, NOTING ALSO THAT SANYA HAD APPOINTED RTA CIN C GEN. KRIS SRIVARA AS COMMANDER OF CAPITAL GARRISON AND FORMER POLICE DEPUTY DIRGEN PRACHUAB SUNTHARANGUL AS NEW POLICE DIRGEN.

2. NCNA OCTOBER 19 ADDITIONALLY CARRIED ARTICLE REPORTING FREQUENT STRIKES THIS YEAR BY THAI WORKERS " TO OPPOSE THE CRUEL OPPRESSION AND

EXPLOITATION BY THE THANOM-PRAPHAT CLIQUE AND STRIVE FOR BASIC LIVING RIGHTS." CITING THAI LABOR DEPT STATISTICS THAT 178 STRIKES HAD OCCURRED ALREADY THIS YEAR IN BANGKOK AND OTHER AREAS, ARTICLE SAID THIS WAS FIVE TIMES THAT FOR ALL OF 1972 AND THAT RECENT STRIKES HAD INVOLVED MORE THAN 50,000 WORKERS. DESCRIBING STRIKE ISSUES, NCNA STRESSED STRUGGLE FOR BETTER LIVING CONDITIONS AGAINST UNREASONABLE REGULATION AND SOARING COMMODITY PRICES, WON WIDE PUBLIC SUPPORT. ARTICLE ADDED THAT MANY PEASANTS HAVE STRUGGLED " AGAINST THANON-PRAPHAT CLIQUE'S REQUISITION OF LAND WITHOUT COMPENSATION AND SEIZING OF LAND BY LANDLORDS."

COMMENT: PRC MEDIA WAS SLOW IN ITS COVERAGE OF DEVELOPMENTS WHICH LED TO STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS THAT TOPPLED THANOM GOVERNMENT AND INCLUSION OF NCNA ARTICLE ON LABOR-PEASANT UNREST APPEARS INTENDED TO EXPLAIN ALLEGED UNDERLYING CAUSES. IN DOING SO PEKING CONTINUES TO AVOID LINKING SUCH CAUSES TO U.S. OR TO THAI COMMUNIST PARTY MOVEMENT (REFTELS). SPECIFIC CITATION THAT NEW SANYA CABINET INCLUDES NUMBER OF THANOM HOLDOVERS WAS PROBABLY DESIGNED TO HEDGE PRC POSITION VIS-A-VIS NEW THAI GOVERNMENT. THUS A PEG IS PROVIDED IF FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD SHOULD DICTATE A HARDER PRC LINE BE TAKEN.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, CABINET, GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, POLITICAL STABILITY, ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973HONGK10599
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1 DEAN
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: HONG KONG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731019/aaaaaoav.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) WR 42, (B) HONG KONG 10529
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28-Aug-2001 by boyleja>; APPROVED <18-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

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Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRC-THAILAND
TAGS: PFOR, CH, TH, (SANYA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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